

## Missing Newark Cornerstone Turns Up on Montclair Porch



B. Palmer Davidson and his two children, Paul and Charlotte Elizabeth Davidson, display the stone eagle

### Carving Disappeared When Old Custom House and Postoffice Was Demolished; New Owner Says He Got It From a Warehouse

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MONTCLAIR, N. J., Jan. 1.—The mystery surrounding the missing cornerstone of the old United States Custom House and Postoffice, recently demolished in Newark, apparently has been solved with the appearance of a stone, a large American eagle, on the front porch of B. Palmer Davidson, of 383 Park Street, Montclair.

When the Newark building was being demolished, scores of W. P. A. workers searched for the eagle, which became the source of much debate as to whether it had ever existed or not. Some declared the building never had a cornerstone. Others said it had been lost during construction of an addition. Those who insisted it did exist recalled that an American flag had been wrapped over its wings in 1897, when the building was dedicated.

Cephas I. Shirley, business manager of the Newark Board of Education, was among those who insisted the eagle was more than a myth. His uncle, Robert Shirley, had carved it, he said. In the absence of another

cornerstone, the eagle had been pressed into service as main stone at the dedication ceremonies, Mr. Shirley stated.

Mr. Davidson said he got the eagle at a near-by warehouse. The thing weighs about two tons. Neighbors observed it one morning recently on his front porch at 383 Park Street, where it had apparently come to roost.

Handsomely carved, the eagle is not the only relic in the Davidson home. Shifting with the wind on top of the house is a two-year-old weather vane, taken from the recently demolished St. Paul's Methodist-Episcopal Church, at Broad and Marshall Streets, in Newark.

Other relics in the Davidson home include the gray felt hat which Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh left behind when he flew to Paris in 1927, an airplane propeller used by Clarence Chamberlin, part of the cowl from Richard E. Byrd's tri-motored trans-Atlantic plane "America" and a torn piece of fabric from the Graf Zeppelin.